

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 7014
By McNally

A RESOLUTION to commend Senator Howard H. Baker, Jr. for his lifetime of honorable and distinguished service to the people of Tennessee and this nation.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly and the citizens of Tennessee are intensely proud of this State's sons and daughters who have made their mark in public service in this State and who have gone on to make great contributions in both the national and the international arenas; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should pause to specially recognize those estimable public servants who have committed their energy and intellectual resources to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Howard H. Baker, Jr., former United States Senator, White House Chief of Staff, and U.S. Ambassador to Japan, is one such estimable person who evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Howard Henry Baker, Jr. was born November 15, 1925 in Huntsville, Tennessee to the late Howard Henry Baker, Sr. and Dora Ladd Baker; his mother died when Howard Baker, Jr. was eight years old, and his maternal grandmother, Lillie Ladd Mauser, helped raise Howard and his younger sister; and

WHEREAS, Howard Baker, Jr. attended primary and secondary schools in Huntsville until 1941, when he enrolled in McCallie School in Chattanooga, from which he graduated in 1943; and

WHEREAS, upon graduation, Howard Baker, Jr. enlisted in the United States Navy; he studied electrical engineering at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee and at Tulane University as a candidate for the Navy's V-12 officer training program; and

WHEREAS, after completing his military service, Howard Baker, Jr. earned a law degree from the University of Tennessee Law School at Knoxville, where he served as student body president during his final year; and

WHEREAS, following his graduation from law school, Howard Baker, Jr. joined the law firm founded by his grandfather in Huntsville, Tennessee; he won distinction as a trial and corporate attorney and as an active member of the community where his family's roots ran deep; and

WHEREAS, in 1950, Howard Baker, Jr. served as campaign manager for his father's successful bid for the United States House of Representatives, representing Tennessee's Second District; during his father's first term, he met and began dating Joy Dirksen, daughter of U.S. Senator Everett McKinley Dirksen of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the couple married in December 1951 and made their home in Huntsville where Howard, Jr. continued to practice law; son Darek was born in 1953 and daughter Cynthia was born in 1956; and

WHEREAS, the Bakers enjoyed many years of marital bliss until Joy Dirksen Baker's untimely passing in 1993; and

WHEREAS, in 1964, Howard Baker, Jr. narrowly lost a special election to fill the vacancy created by the death of U.S. Senator Estes Kefauver, but he ran again two years later, winning fifty-six percent of the popular vote and becoming Tennessee's first popularly elected Republican U.S. Senator; and

WHEREAS, during his three terms in the U.S. Senate, Howard Baker, Jr. played a key role in a range of legislative initiatives, from fair housing to equal voting rights, the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, revenue sharing with the states, the Senate investigation of the Watergate scandal, the ratification of the Panama Canal Treaties, national energy policy, and much more; and

WHEREAS, Senator Baker gave the keynote address at the 1976 Republican convention and was considered by President Gerald Ford as a running-mate; Howard Baker, Jr. then served as Senate Minority Leader from 1977 until 1981, and Majority Leader of the Senate from 1981 until 1985; and

WHEREAS, Senator Baker was a candidate for the Presidency in 1980; in March of that year he withdrew from the race and placed his support behind Ronald Reagan; and

WHEREAS, after retiring from the U.S. Senate, Howard Baker, Jr. returned to private law practice until 1987, when he accepted President Reagan's call to become White House Chief of Staff, serving in that role until July 1988; and

WHEREAS, Senator Baker also served as a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board during the presidencies of Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush; and

WHEREAS, after his intrepid service with the Reagan Administration, Howard Baker, Jr. spent the next thirteen years practicing in a number of Tennessee law firms, including Vinson and Elkins; Baker, Worthington, Crossley, Stansberry, and Wolf; and Baker, Donelson, Bearman and Caldwell; and

WHEREAS, in December 1996, Howard Baker married Nancy Landon Kassebaum, a former U.S. Senator from Kansas, and the couple have since cherished their love for each other during both life's joys and sorrows; and

WHEREAS, Howard Baker, Jr. served with distinction as U.S. Ambassador to Japan during the Presidency of George W. Bush and during the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Japan; he retired from this important work in February of 2005; and

WHEREAS, Senator Baker has been honored with the Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian award, in recognition of his enlightened political leadership and statesmanship; and

WHEREAS, Howard Baker, Jr.'s remarkable success as a public servant, whether in elective or appointive office, is directly attributable to his reliance on the time-honored values of hard work and common sense; his standards of civility, courage, constructive compromise, good will, and wisdom serve as an example for all who follow him in public service; and

WHEREAS, Howard H. Baker, Jr. is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby commend Howard H. Baker, Jr. for his honorable and astute service to the good people of Tennessee and this nation as a United States Senator, White House Chief of Staff, and U.S. Ambassador to Japan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.